



BAJI RAO 1

THE WARRIOR PESHWA

Vol 729





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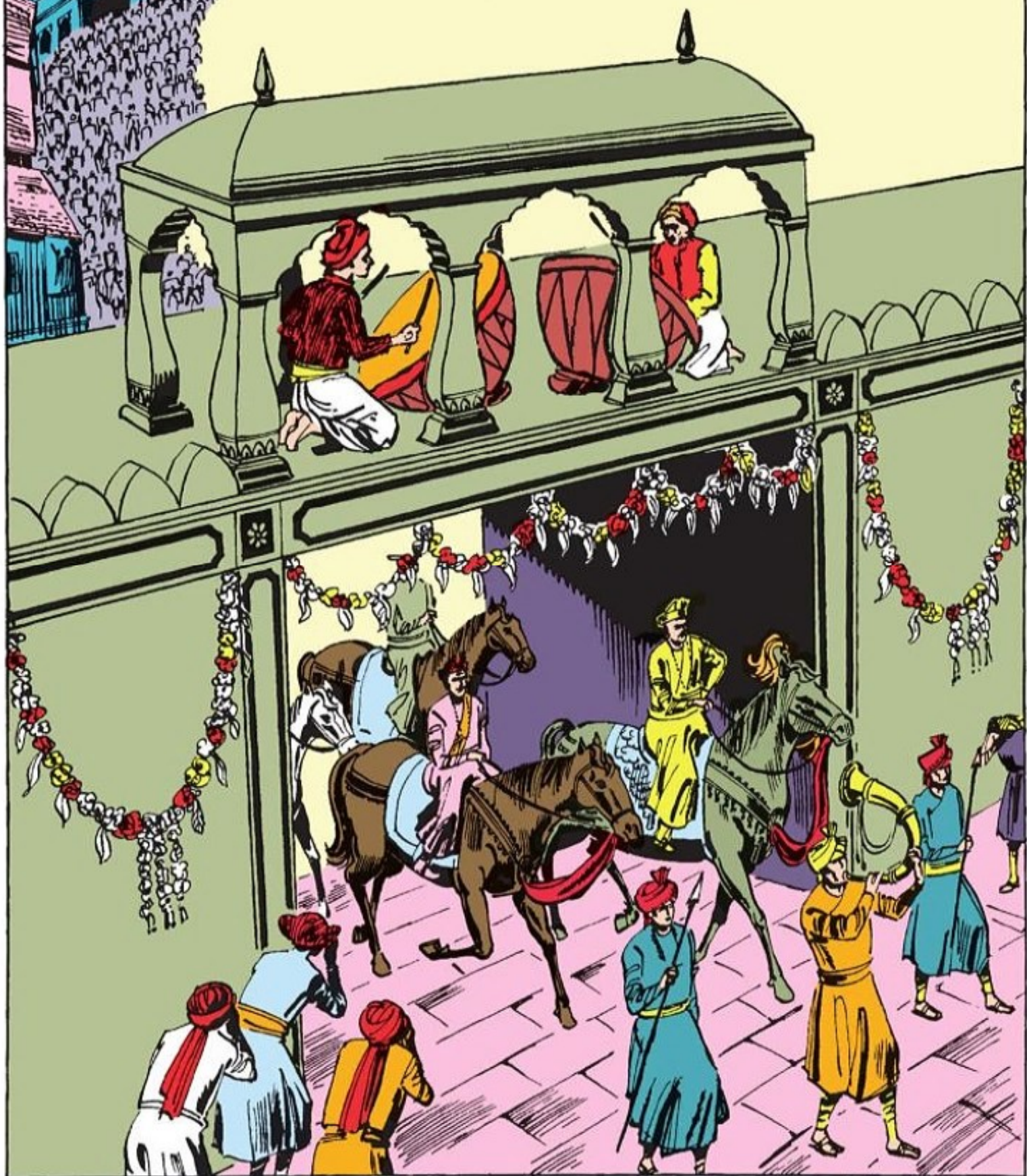
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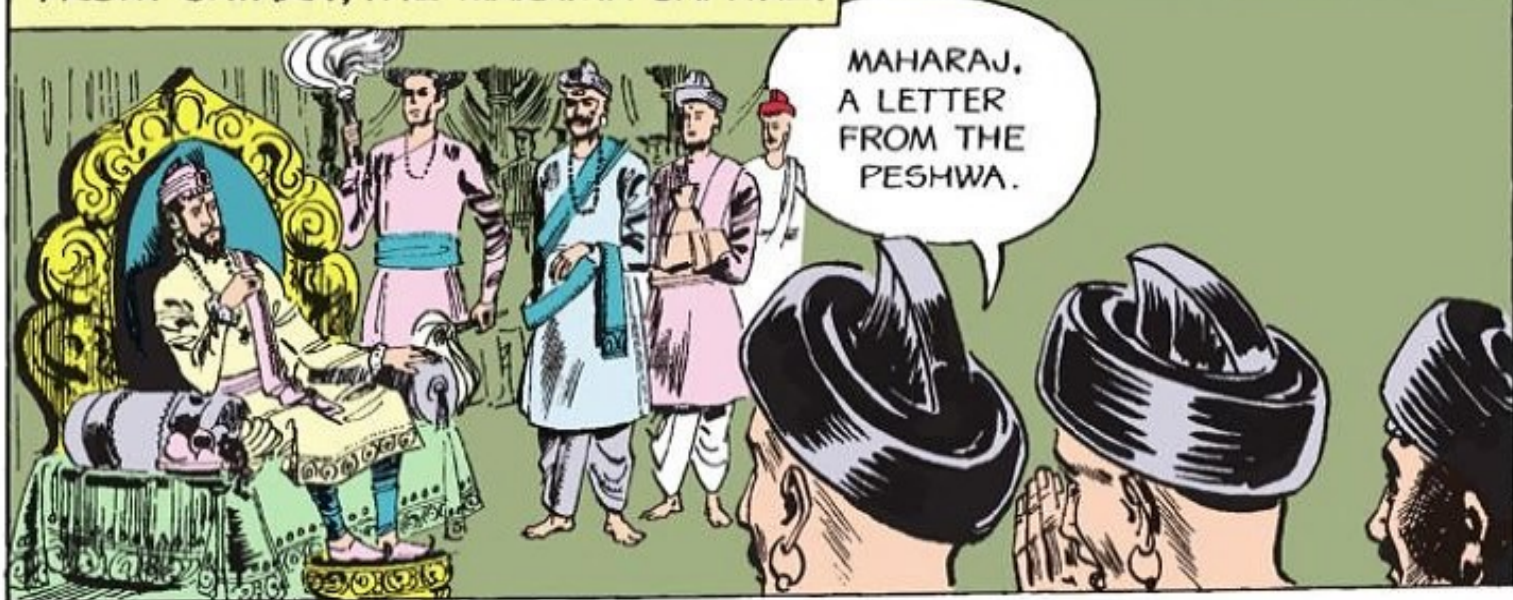
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BAJI RAO-I



IN 1718, BALAJI VISHWANATH, THE PESHWA OR PRIME MINISTER OF THE MARATHAS, WAS A POWER TO RECKON WITH.
HIS YOUNG SON BAJI RAO WAS IMBUED
WITH THE MARTIAL SPIRIT.

THEIR MASTER SHAHU, THE GREAT SHIVAJI'S GRANDSON, RULED FROM SATARA, THE MARATHA CAPITAL.



IN DELHI, INTRIGUE AND VIOLENCE WERE RAMPANT. EMPEROR FARRUKH SIYAR, JEALOUS OF THE POWER OF THE SYED BROTHERS, WAS PLOTTING AGAINST THEM.



THE NIZAM WAS THE EMPEROR'S LEADING SUBEDAR OR GOVERNOR.



THEY HAVE ON
THEIR SIDE, MIGHTY
WARRIORS LIKE
THE PESHWA.



THAT
MARATHA RAT!
I HAVE THE TRAP
FOR HIM.



MEANWHILE, PESHWA BALAJI VISHWANATH ACCOMPANIED BY HIS
BRILLIANT SON BAJI RAO...



...AND LEADING AN ARMY OF FIFTEEN THOUSAND, HAD REACHED
THE OUTSKIRTS OF DELHI.



SUDDENLY...

THE MAN IN THE PALANQUIN
MUST BE THE PESHWA!

KILL
HIM!

THE SOLDIERS HOWEVER WERE MISTAKEN.

WE HAVE HAD A NARROW ESCAPE,
FATHER. THEY SEEM TO BE
THE NIZAM'S MEN.

I'LL HAVE TO
TALK
TO THE
EMPEROR.

THEN WITH THE HELP OF BALAJI VISHWANATH, THE SYED BROTHERS
SOON SUCCEEDED IN DEPOSING THE FEEBLE MONARCH.

DELHI HAS
A NEW
EMPEROR
AGAIN.

LONG
LIVE
THE
EMPEROR!

LATER IN THE PALACE...

YOUR MAJESTY,
WE OWE OUR
SUCCESS TO
THE PESHWA.

I KNOW,
VAZIR
SAHEB.

THE NEW EMPEROR WAS A PUPPET IN THE HANDS OF HIS VAZIR,
SYED ABDULLAH.

YOUR MAJESTY CAN NOW
ASK THE SUBEDARS
TO DISPERSE. SEND
THE NIZAM TO
MALWA.

I WILL...
I WILL.

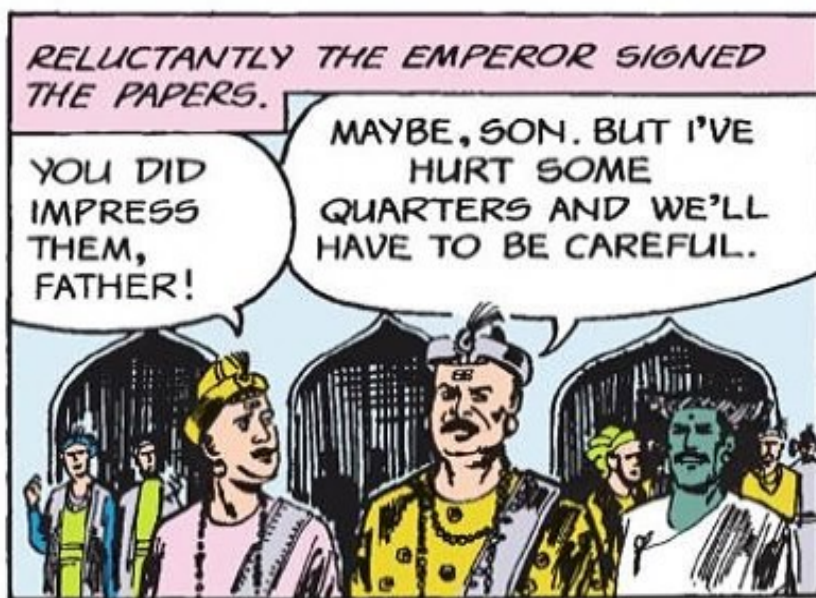
THE PESHWA MUST
BE PAID. I'VE
ALREADY PROMISED
HIM THE CHOUTHAI
OF SIX SUBAS,
SIRE!

IT
SHALL BE
DONE.



ANYTHING ELSE?

WE MUST
RELEASE
CHHATRAPATI
SHAHU'S
MOTHER,
WHO'S STILL
A CAPTIVE
IN THE
PALACE.

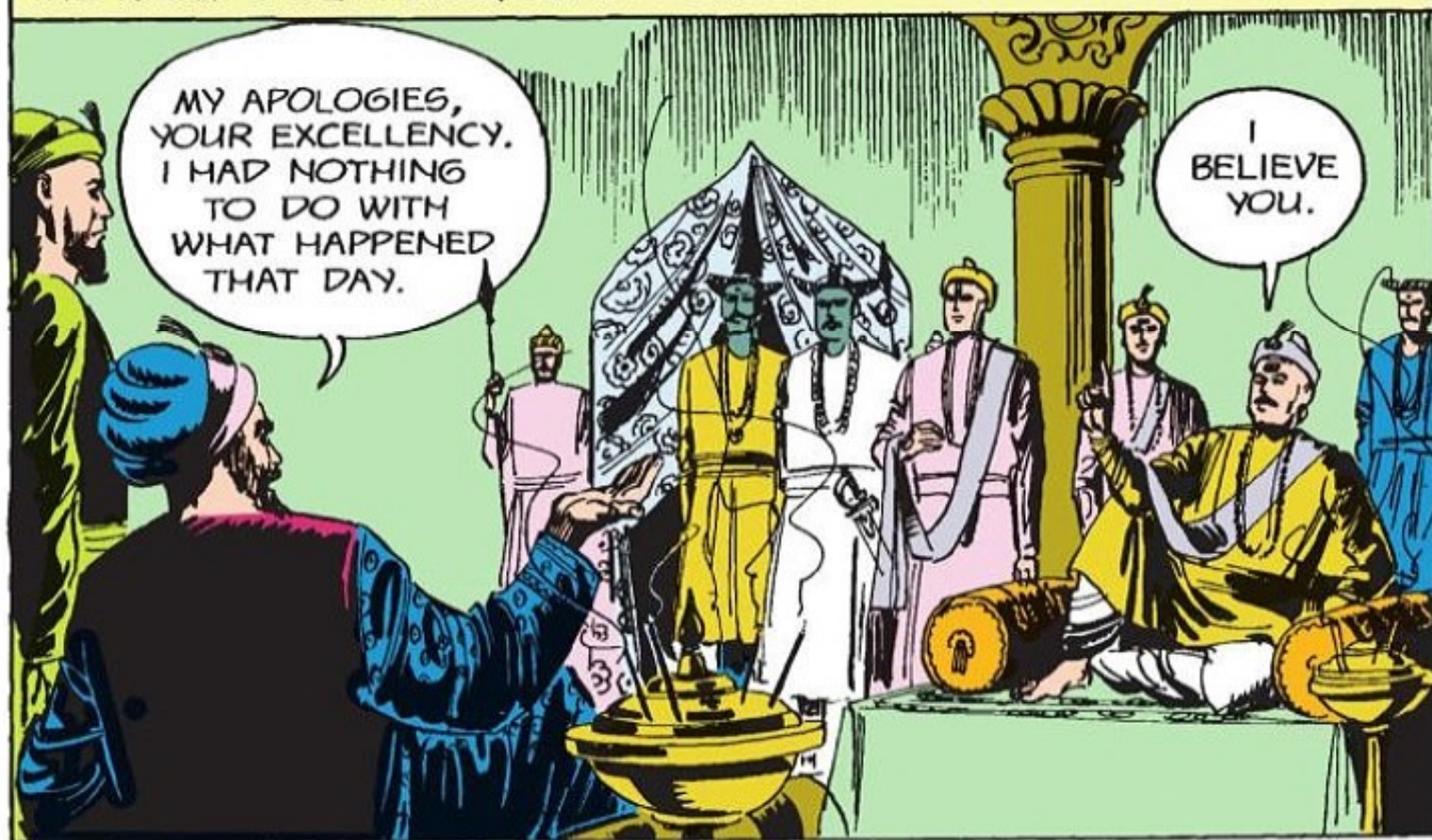


RELUCTANTLY THE EMPEROR SIGNED
THE PAPERS.

YOU DID
IMPRESS
THEM,
FATHER!

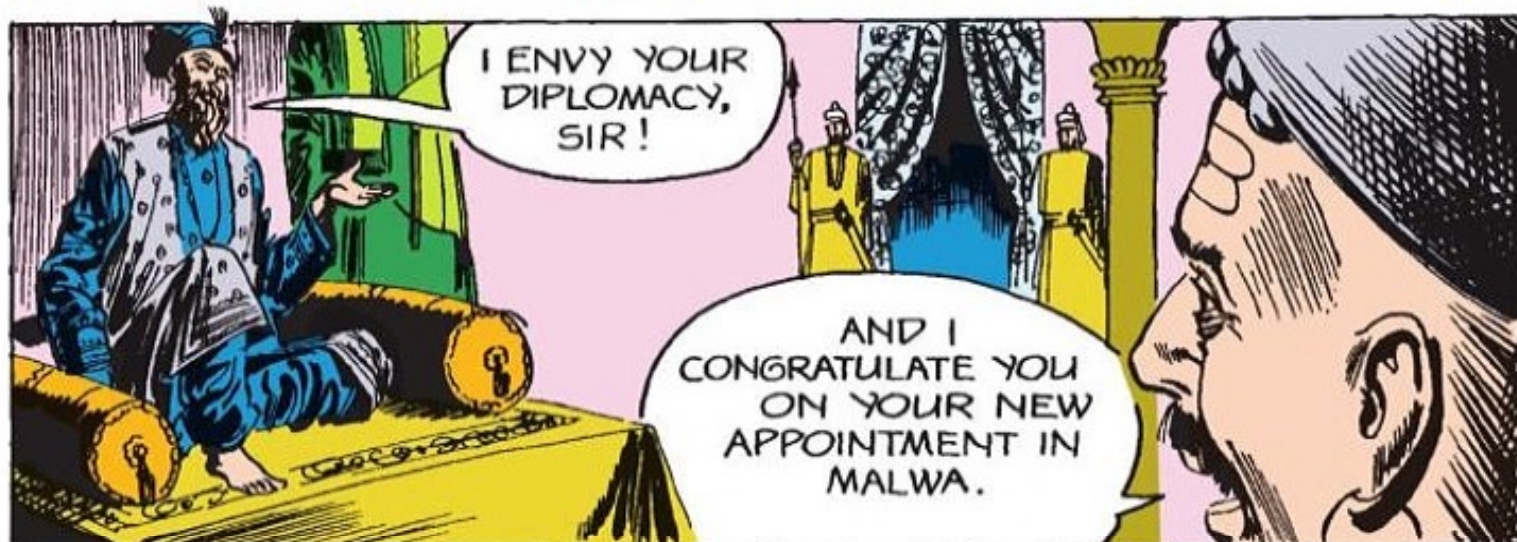
MAYBE, SON. BUT I'VE
HURT SOME
QUARTERS AND WE'LL
HAVE TO BE CAREFUL.

THE NIZAM GAVE A BANQUET IN HONOUR OF THE PESHWA. LATER...



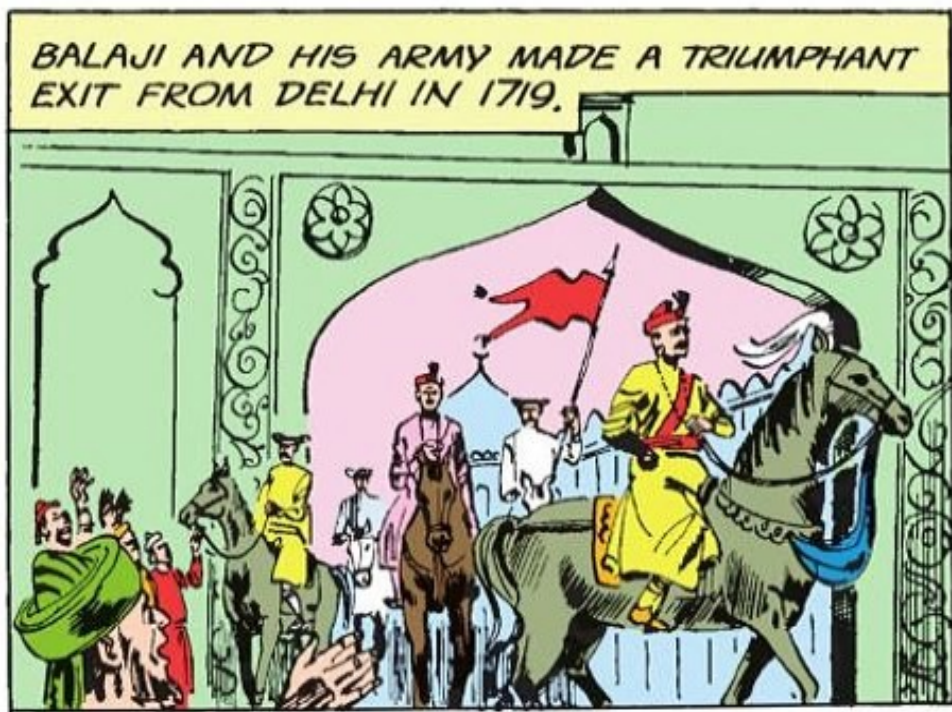
MY APOLOGIES,
YOUR EXCELLENCY.
I HAD NOTHING
TO DO WITH
WHAT HAPPENED
THAT DAY.

I
BELIEVE
YOU.

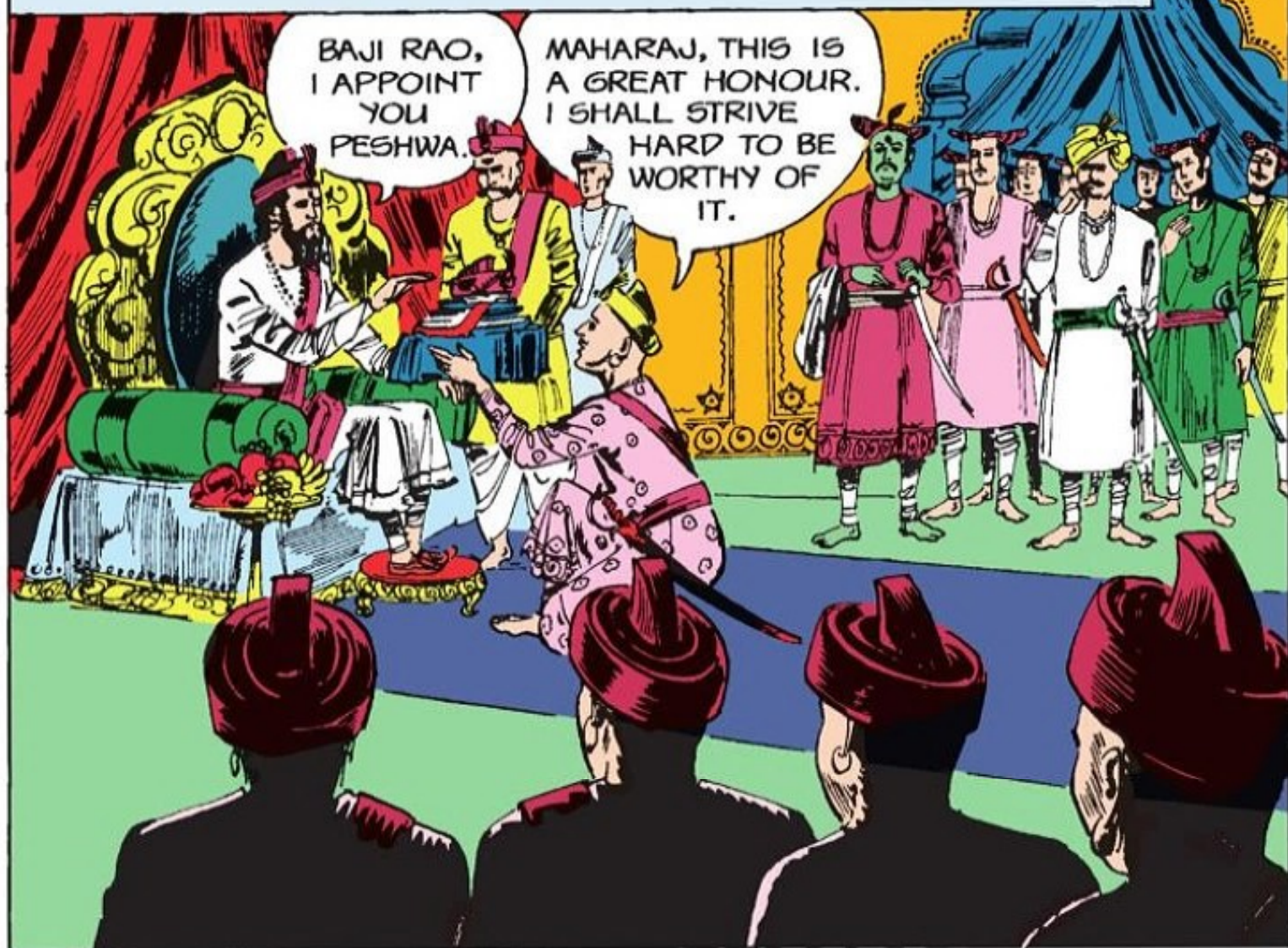


I ENVY YOUR
DIPLOMACY,
SIR!

AND I
CONGRATULATE YOU
ON YOUR NEW
APPOINTMENT IN
MALWA.

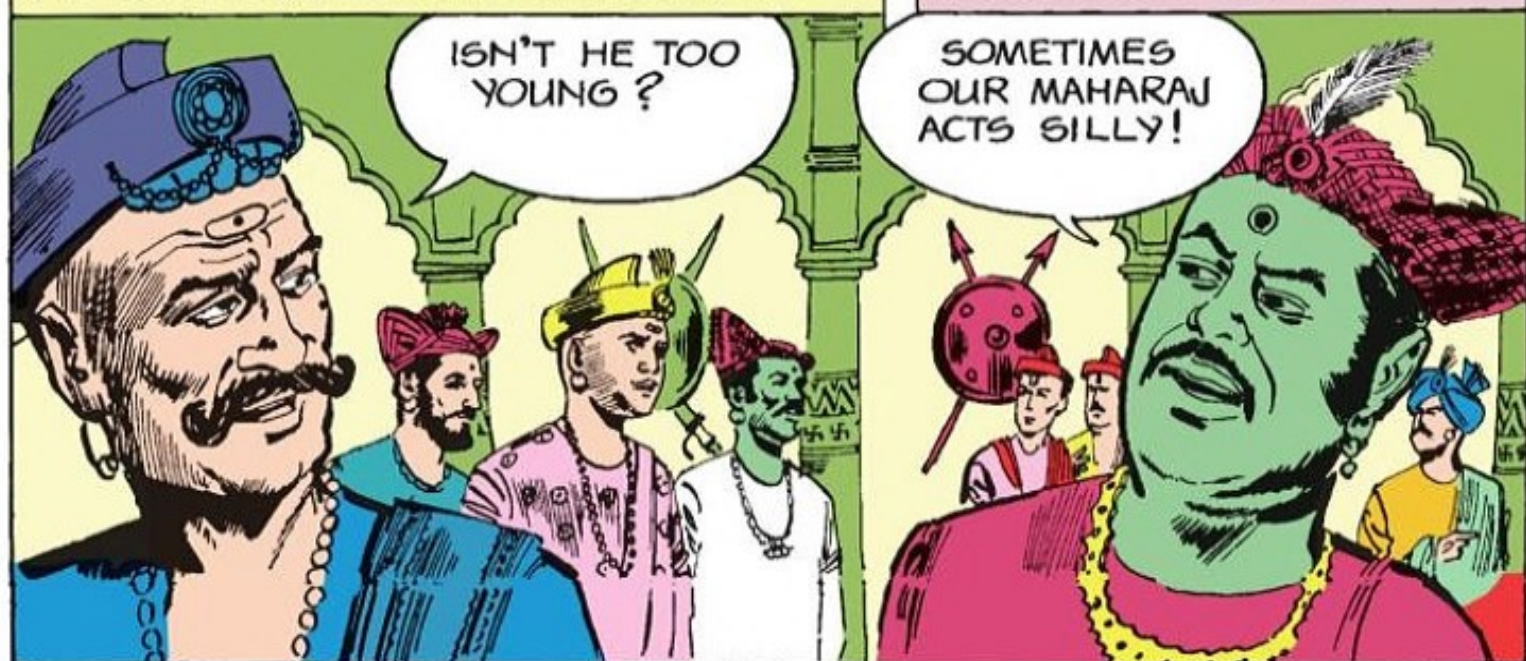


BALAJI DIED AFTER HIS RETURN FROM DELHI AND BAJI RAO WAS SUMMONED BY SHAHU.



BAJI RAO WAS JUST TWENTY YEARS OLD THEN. MANY IN SHAHU'S COURT ENVIED HIM. ONE OF THEM WAS THE PRATINIDHI, AN ELDER STATESMAN.

TRIMBAKRAO DABHADE, SON OF THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE MARATHA ARMY, WAS ANOTHER.



BAJI RAO WAS BRAVE AND AMBITIOUS. MANY YOUNG MARATHA WARRIORS GREW TO RESPECT HIM. SHINDE AND HOLKAR, THE TWO NEWLY-CREATED SARDARS, WERE HIS TRUSTED LIEUTENANTS.

HOLKAR, THIS I BELIEVE...
WE CAN BECOME
THE MOST POWERFUL
FORCE IN THE
COUNTRY.

*SHRIMANT, OUR
KINGDOM IS SMALL.
THE NIZAM, A SARDAR
OF THE MUGHAL
EMPIRE HAS A
MIGHTIER ARMY.

* THE PROSPEROUS ONE. THE TITLE BY WHICH THE PESHWAS WERE ADDRESSED.

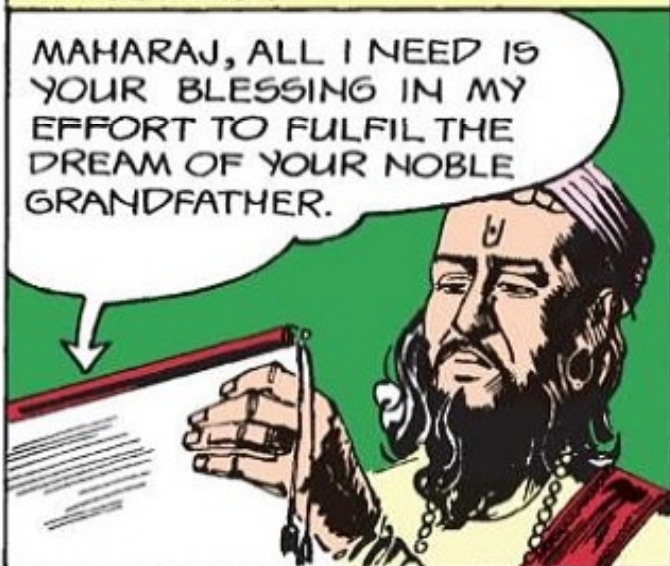
BUT THE TREE OF THE
BIG IMPERIAL POWER IS
ROTTEN... IF WE STRIKE
AT ITS ROOTS THE
BRANCHES WILL FALL
BY THEMSELVES.

HOLKAR AND I ARE PREPARED
TO LAY DOWN OUR VERY
LIVES FOR YOU,
SHRIMANT!

AT THE COURT OF SATARA, BAJI RAO RECEIVED LITTLE SUPPORT FOR HIS AMBITIOUS PLANS. HIS RIVALS TRIED TO INFLUENCE SHAHU.



KING SHAHU RECEIVED A LETTER FROM BAJI RAO. HE WAS IMPRESSED.

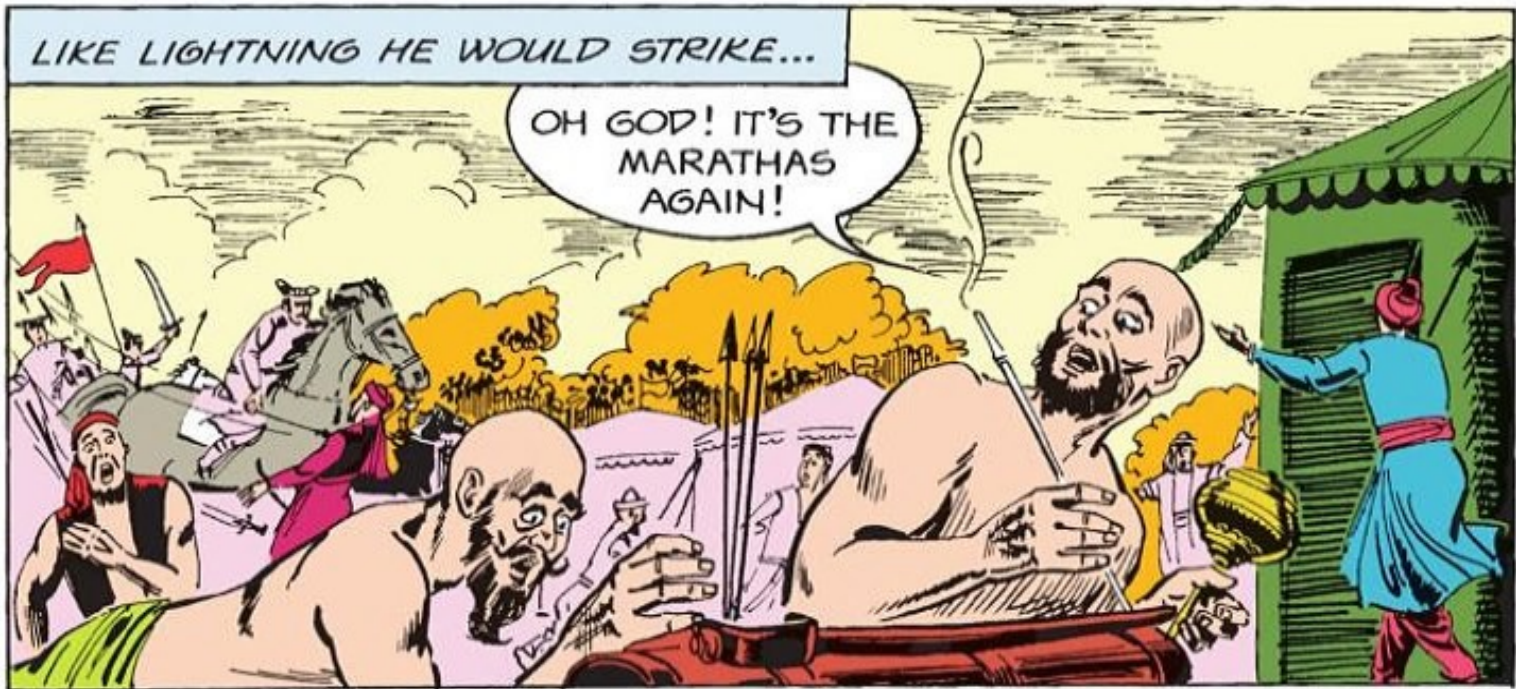


FOR FIVE YEARS, BAJI RAO CONTINUED NIBBLING AT THE DOMAINS OF THE MUGHAL EMPEROR AND OF HIS SUBEDARS, PARTICULARLY THOSE UNDER THE NIZAM.



LIKE LIGHTNING HE WOULD STRIKE...

OH GOD! IT'S THE
MARATHAS
AGAIN!



...AND VANISH AS QUICKLY.

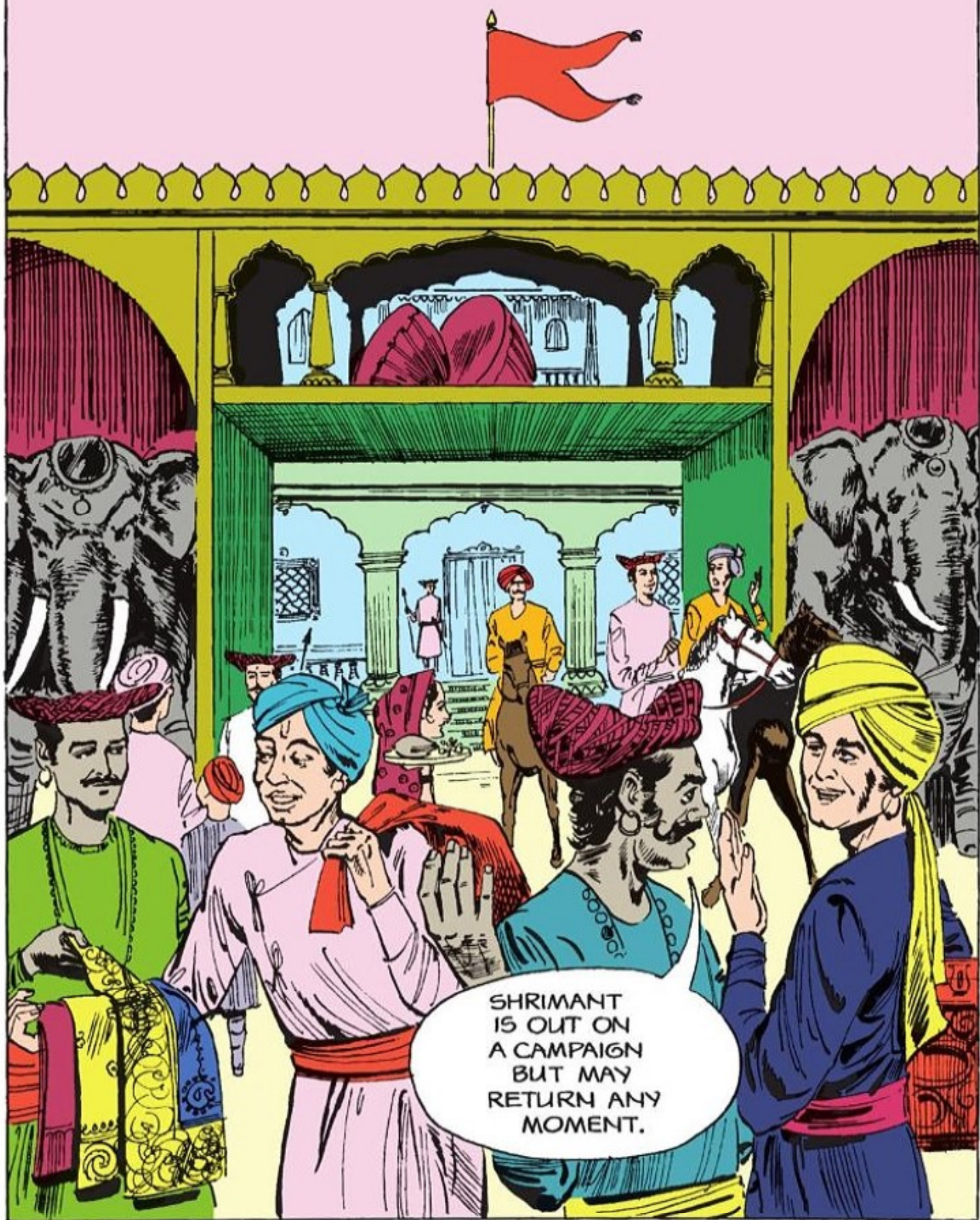
THEY'RE
GONE! YOUR
HELP COMES
LATE!



SOON, HIS ARMIES HAD CONTROL OVER A VAST TERRITORY EXTENDING
FROM BUNDELKHAND TO GUJARAT.



THE PESHWA NOW BECAME THE VIRTUAL RULER OF THE MARATHAS;
AND POONA WHERE HE LIVED, BECAME THE CENTRE OF POLITICAL
ACTIVITY. BUT HE RULED IN THE NAME OF HIS MASTER AT SATARA.

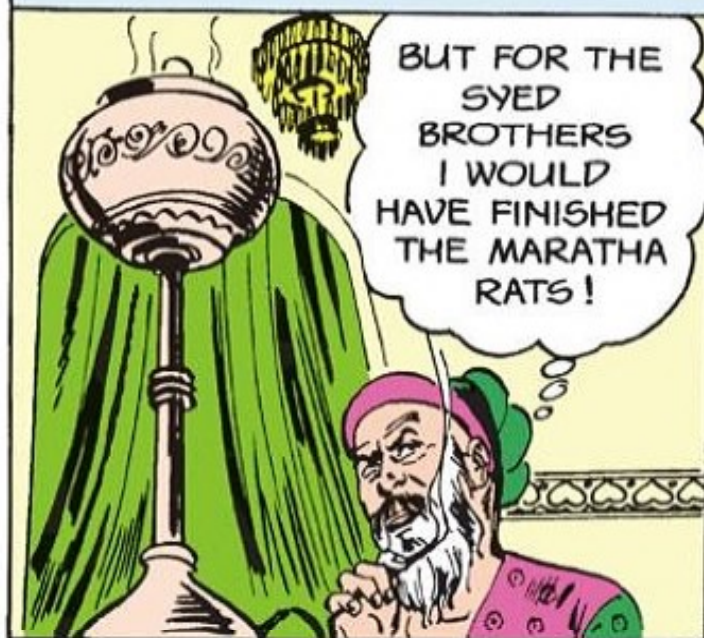


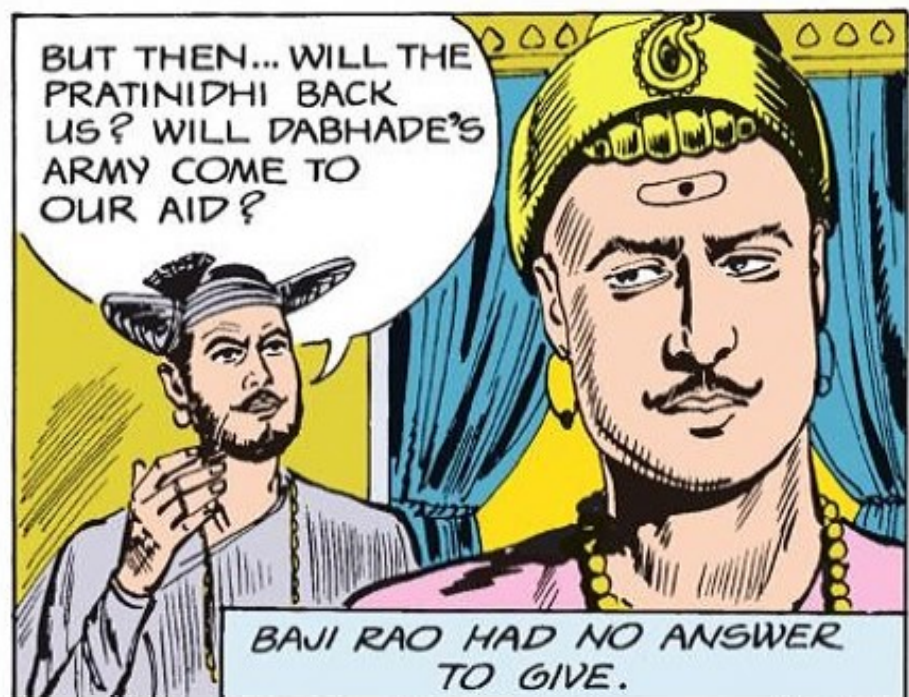
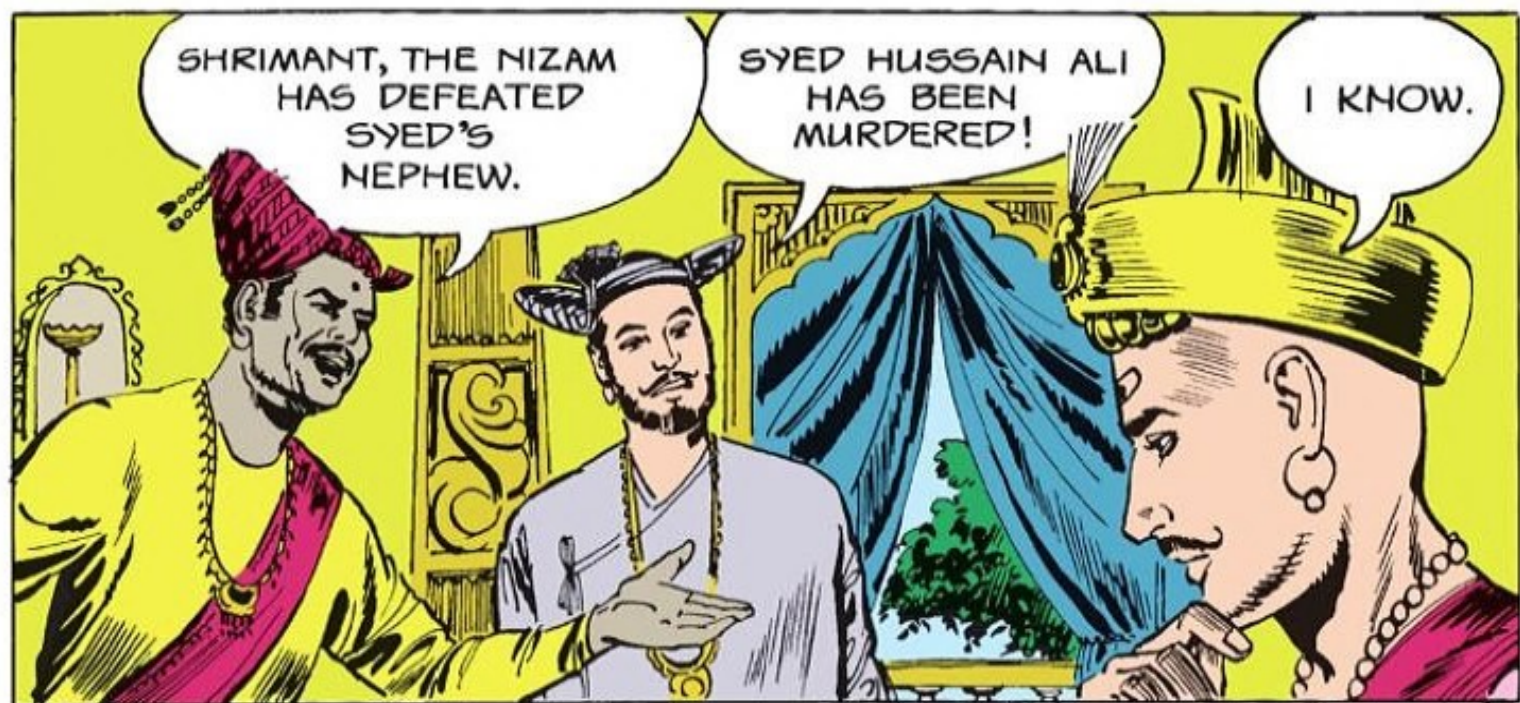
BAJI RAO'S CAMPAIGNS BROUGHT MUCH WEALTH TO THE MARATHA KINGDOM. BUT DABHADE AND THE PRATINIDHI ALWAYS TRIED TO MALIGN HIM.



THUS, SLOWLY BAJI RAO GAINED THE CONFIDENCE OF SHAHU.

MEANWHILE, THE NIZAM HAD HIS OWN PLANS TO SUPPRESS BAJI RAO.





AFTER BECOMING THE VAZIR OF THE MUGHAL EMPIRE IN 1722, THE NIZAM ACQUIRED FURTHER POWER. THEN, AGAINST THE WISHES OF THE EMPEROR HE CAME SOUTH.



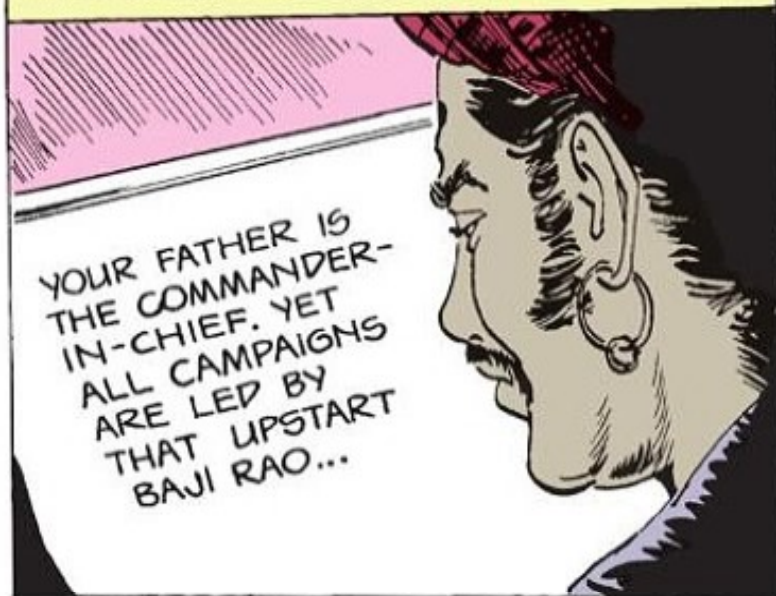
SOON THE PRATINIDHI HAD AN OFFER.

THE NIZAM HAS OFFERED ME THE JAGIR OF BERAR...



TRIMBAKRAO DABHADE WAS THE NEXT TARGET.

YOUR FATHER IS THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF. YET ALL CAMPAIGNS ARE LED BY THAT UPSTART BAJI RAO...



THE NIZAM MARCHED TOWARDS POONA.



EVEN SHAHU'S COUSIN SAMBHAJI IS FIGHTING ON MY SIDE. THIS TIME IT WILL BE THE END OF BAJI RAO!

THE NEWS REACHED BAJI RAO.



SHRIMANT, THE NIZAM IS HEADING FOR POONA WITH A BIG ARMY.

WE'LL MEET HIM HALF-WAY.

WITH LIGHTNING SPEED BAJI RAO AND HIS MEN MOVED TOWARDS BURHANPUR, WHERE THE NIZAM WAS CAMPING, BUT...



...BYPASSED HIM AND RUSHED ONWARDS.



SHRIMANT, DO WE NOT FIGHT THE ENEMY?

NOT IN THIS OPEN PLACE. WE WILL CHOOSE THE BATTLE-FIELD.

FINALLY, AT PALKHED THEY CAME TO A HALT READY TO FACE THE NIZAM. BUT THERE WAS DISTURBING NEWS.

SHRIMANT, INSTEAD OF COMING TO OUR AID, DABHADE IS RAIDING YOUR OWN MALWA.

OUR OWN TERRITORY?
...WELL...



SHOULDN'T WE SEND SOME TROOPS TO FIGHT HIM?

NO. THIS IS NO TIME TO FIGHT AMONG OURSELVES.



THE PRATINIDHI TOO, WHOM SHAHU HAD SENT WITH REINFORCEMENTS, WAS IN NO MOOD TO HELP BAJI RAO.

LET THE NIZAM FINISH BAJI RAO.
...THEN I'LL RISE IN PROMINENCE IN KING SHAHU'S COURT.



DETERMINED TO GET OVER THESE ODDS, BAJI RAO LAID SIEGE TO THE NIZAM'S CAMP CUTTING OFF ALL SUPPLIES! THE NIZAM BECAME DESPERATE...



IN THE END THE NIZAM HAD TO SURRENDER. HE WENT TO MEET BAJI RAO.



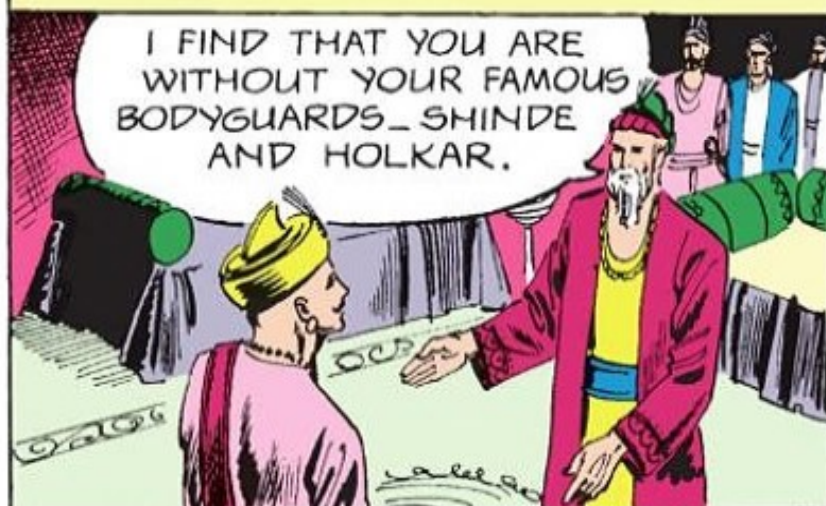
BAJI RAO WAS FIRM IN HIS DEMANDS.

OUR RIGHTS TO THE REVENUE IN THE DECCAN MUST CONTINUE.





LATER, THE PESHWA VISITED THE
OLD MAN. THE NIZAM WAS FULL OF
ADMIRATION.







THE NOBLE WARRIOR IS A POET TOO!

* THE APPEAL IN CATCHING VERSE WHICH LATER BECAME A LEGEND, MEANS: BUNDELKHAND IS LOSING FACE. SAVE OUR HONOUR, OH BAJI!

TEMPESTUOUS AS EVER, BAJI RAO RUSHED ON.

TO BUNDELKHAND WE GO!

ANOTHER WHIRLWIND CAMPAIGN.

WITH PARCHED RICE AND GRAM TO EAT.



HE REACHED MAHUA TO MEET CHHATRASAL.


BAJI, I DIDN'T EXPECT YOU SO SOON!

IT'S MY FILIAL DUTY.



A DETAILED CAMPAIGN WAS CHALKED OUT; AND THE COMBINED FORCES OF BAJI RAO AND CHHATRASAL SURROUNDED JAIPUR, WHERE BANGAS WAS CAMPING.

HAR HAR MAHADEO !



AFTER A FURIOUS BATTLE WHICH WENT ON FOR DAYS, TRUMPETS OF VICTORY SOUNDED.


BANGAS HAS SURRENDERED !

HAIL BAJI RAO !



CHHATRASAL WAS SO HAPPY, HE IMMEDIATELY HELD A DURBAR TO HONOUR BAJI RAO.

MY PEOPLE!
I PROUDLY PRESENT
TO YOU MY THIRD
SON - BAJI RAO !



BAJI RAO
KI JAI !

HE SHOWERED WEALTH ON THE PESHWA AND OFFERED HIM VAST TERRITORIES.

KALPI, SAGAR, JHANSI,
AND GADKOTE ARE
YOURS.

I AM
OVERWHELMED.
HOW CAN
I ACCEPT
ALL THIS?

YOU MUST. AND
MASTANI TOO.
I KNOW YOUR
LITTLE SECRET.

MASTANI WAS CHHATRASAL'S ADOPTED
DAUGHTER. BAJI RAO HAD FALLEN IN LOVE WITH HER!

THE FAREWELL WAS A TOUCHING ONE.

BUNDELKHAND
SHALL ALWAYS
REMAIN INDEBTED
TO YOU.

THE GIFTS OF
BUNDELKHAND
SHALL FOR EVER
REMAIN DEAR
TO ME.

BEFORE THE PESHWA'S RETURN TO POONA, KHANDERAO DABHADE
HAD DIED AND HIS SON TRIMBAKRAO WAS APPOINTED THE NEW
COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF...IN NAME OF COURSE!

THE NEW COMMANDER
IS CREATING
TROUBLE IN GUJARAT.

REBEL
SARDARS HAVE
JOINED FORCES
WITH HIM.

ONCE AGAIN, BAJI RAO RODE OUT OF POONA...THIS TIME NOT IN A JUBILANT MOOD.



HE WAS NOT GIVEN A CHANCE TO DO SO, HOWEVER.



BAJI RAO SENT A MESSENGER...



BAJI RAO WAS FORCED TO FIGHT.

DO NOT HURT
DABHADE!



BUT A BULLET HAD ALREADY
STRUCK HIM.

THE SENAPATI
HAS FALLEN!



BAJI RAO STOPPED ALL
FIGHTING IMMEDIATELY. HE
WENT UP TO THE DEAD MAN.



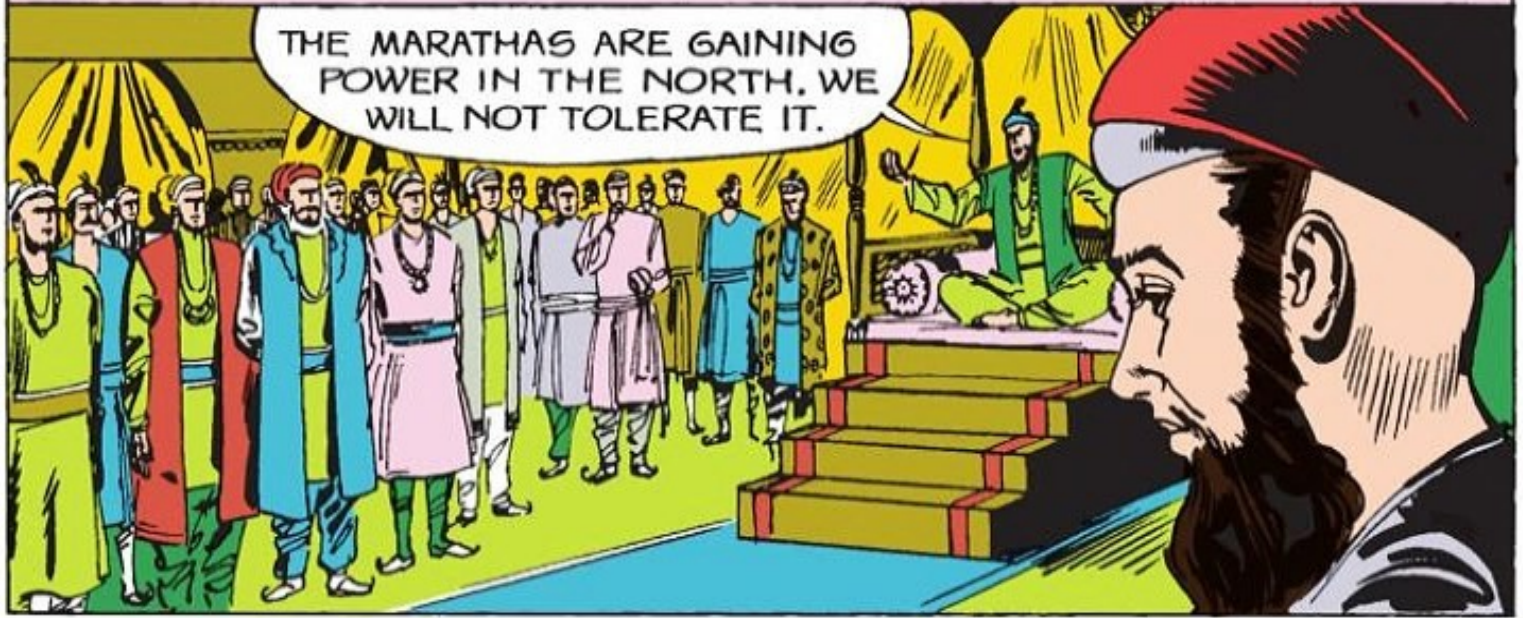
HE CONSOLED DABHADE'S MOTHER.

I HAD NO CHOICE,
MOTHER! LOOK ON
ME AS YOUR SON,
HENCEFORTH.

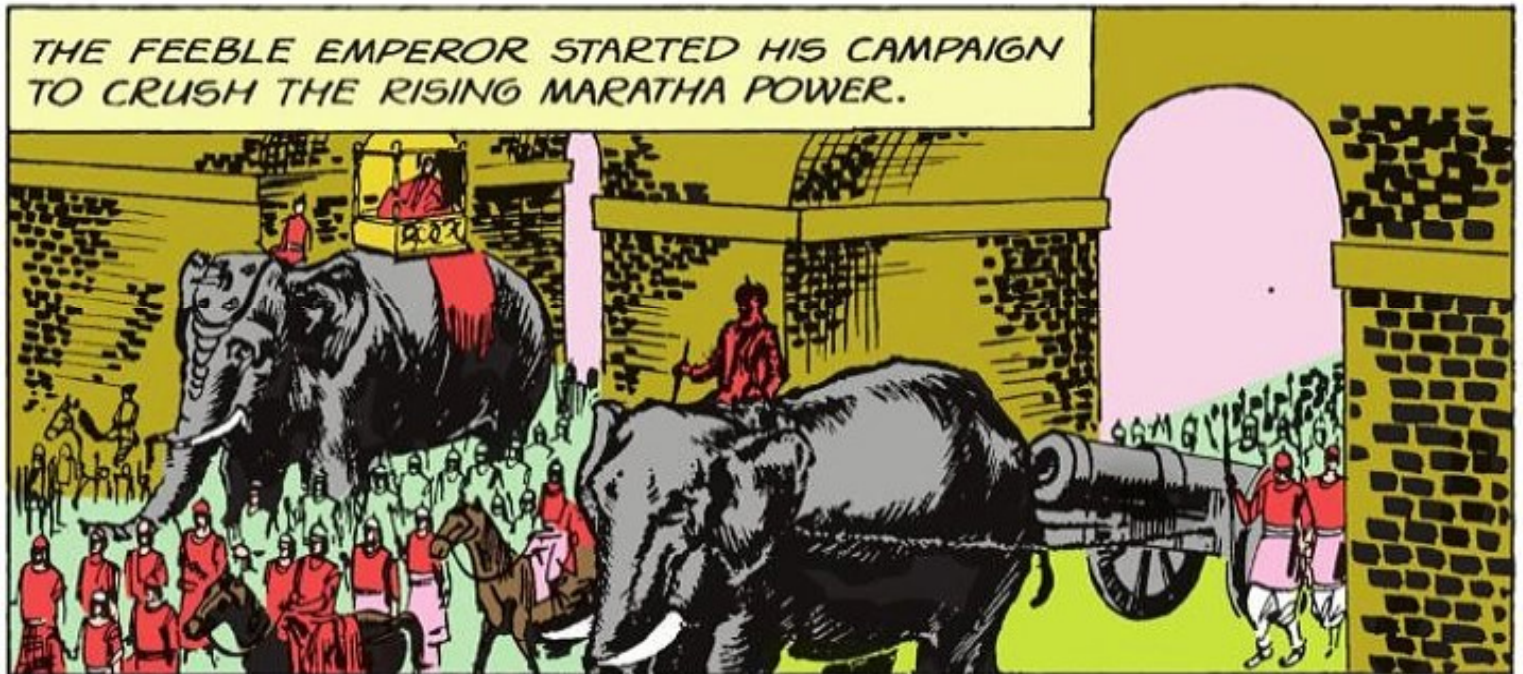


MEANWHILE AT THE COURT OF THE MUGHAL EMPEROR...

THE MARATHAS ARE GAINING POWER IN THE NORTH. WE WILL NOT TOLERATE IT.

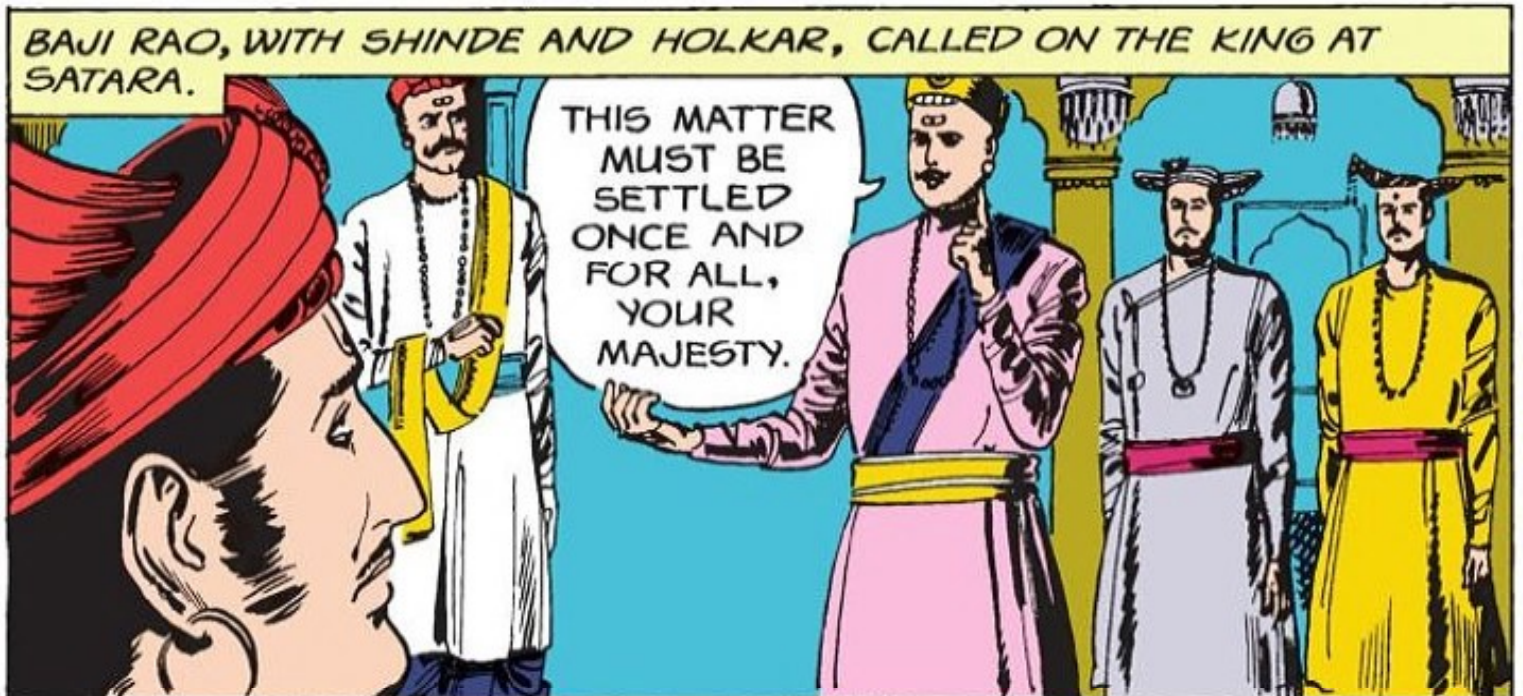


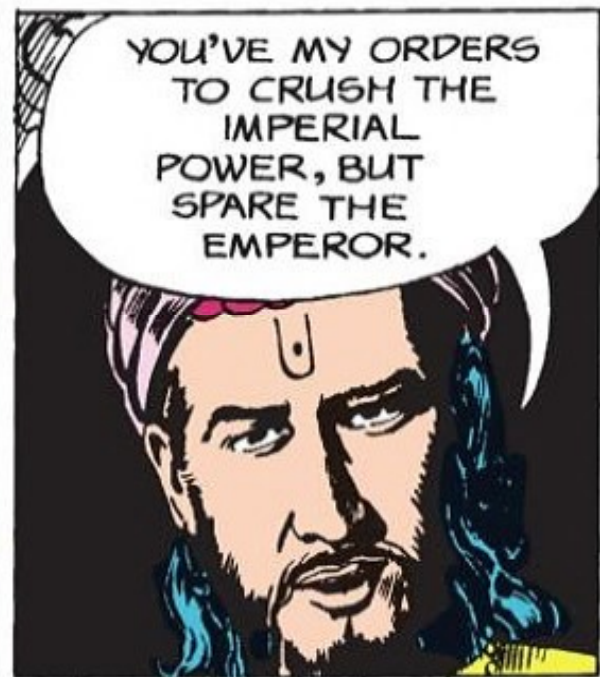
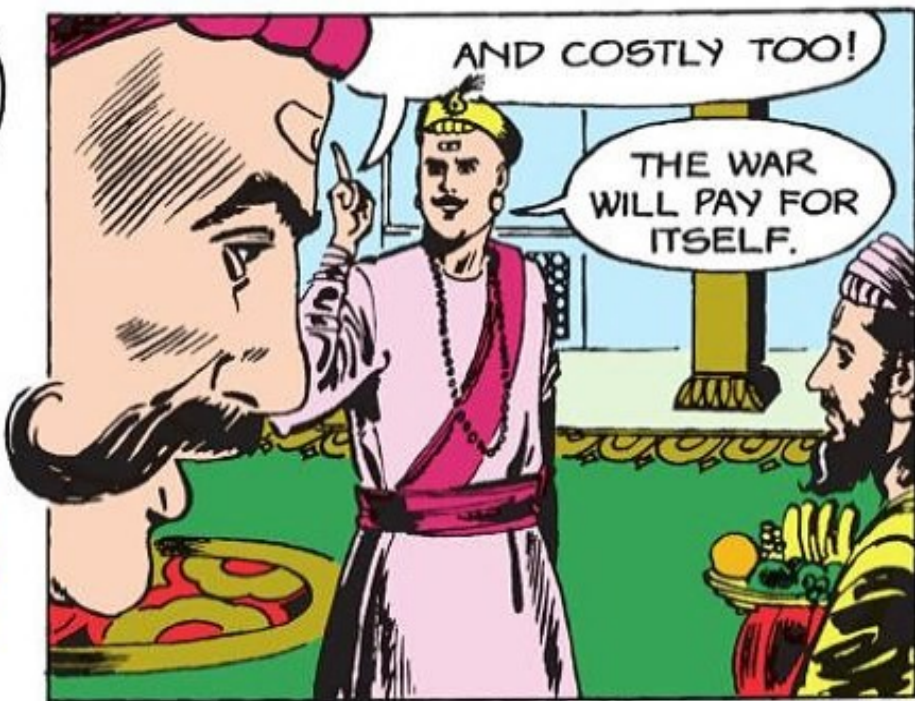
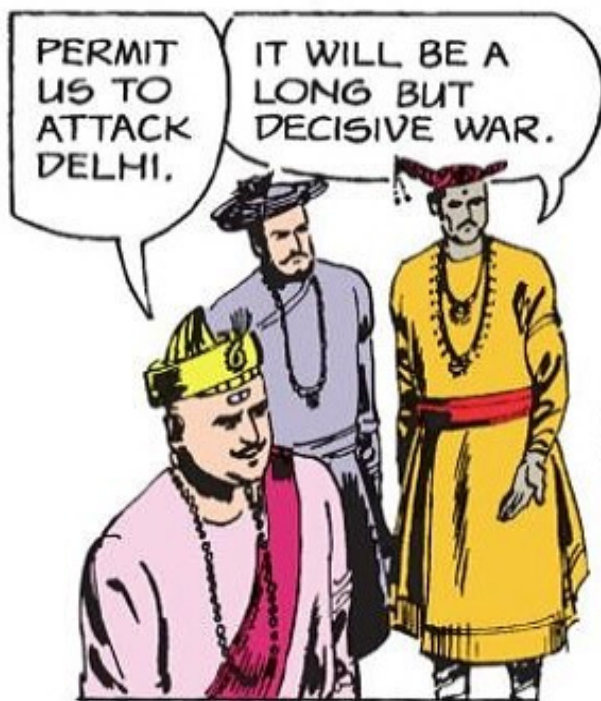
THE FEEBLE EMPEROR STARTED HIS CAMPAIGN TO CRUSH THE RISING MARATHA POWER.



BAJI RAO, WITH SHINDE AND HOLKAR, CALLED ON THE KING AT SATARA.

THIS MATTER MUST BE SETTLED ONCE AND FOR ALL, YOUR MAJESTY.





HE PRESSED ON WITHOUT RESPITE.

WE ARE
TIRED, BUT
NOT HE.

IN TWO DAYS WE HAVE
COVERED A DISTANCE
WHICH ORDINARILY
WOULD TAKE TEN DAYS...



THE MOVEMENTS OF THE MUGHALS WERE SLOW AND SLOTHFUL.

GET MOVING.
BAJI RAO IS ON
HIS WAY.

WHERE'S MY
HUKKAH?



AT BHELSA, SHINDE AND
HOLKAR JOINED HIM.

NOW FOR THE FINAL
BLOW!



THE CHAMBAL WAS CROSSED... ENEMY
AFTER ENEMY WAS DEFEATED...



AND THE TRIUMPHANT MARATHAS MARCHED TOWARDS DELHI.

AVOID THOSE BLOATED KHANS
AMBUSHING AROUND. THROW
DUST IN THEIR EYES!



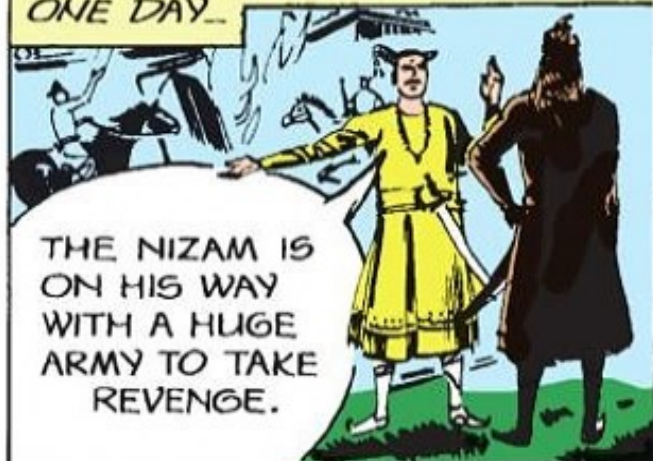
IN MAY 1737, BAJI RAO REACHED THE OUTSKIRTS OF DELHI.



THE MUGHAL FORCES WERE TOTALLY ROUTED IN THE BATTLE THAT
WAS FOUGHT OUTSIDE DELHI.



BAJI RAO MOVED SOUTH-
WARD BUT HIS TROUBLES
WERE NOT OVER. THE NIZAM
HAD REACHED DELHI AND
WAS MUSTERING FORCES.
ONE DAY...



THE NIZAM IS
ON HIS WAY
WITH A HUGE
ARMY TO TAKE
REVENGE.

THE NIZAM MOVED SOUTHWARD
AND CAMPED IN THE FORTRESS
OF BHOPAL.



TO BHOPAL
WE GO.

UNDER BAJI RAO'S COMMAND, THE BATTLE THAT FOLLOWED ENDED
IN A SPLENDID VICTORY FOR THE MARATHAS.



HAIL
BAJI
RAO!

NOW THE
EMPEROR'S
GREATEST
SARDAR IS
AT YOUR
MERCY.

HE'S NOT
A RAT...
HE'S A
TIGER.

SHRIMANT, TODAY YOU'RE
AT THE ZENITH OF YOUR
GLORY. YOU COULD EASILY
DETHRONE THE EMPEROR.

THAT'S ONE THING
I WON'T DO,
HOLKAR. OUR
MAHARAJ WOULD
NOT LIKE IT.



BAJI RAO MADE A TRIUMPHANT RETURN TO POONA.



FAR AHEAD OF HIS TIMES, BAJI RAO WAS DISLIKED BY MANY. BUT HIS PATRIOTISM WAS SO GREAT, NONE DARED CRITICIZE HIM OPENLY. HISTORIANS COMPARE THIS 'EXCELLENT PRINCE' TO NAPOLEON, AND IF WALLS COULD SPEAK, SHANWAR WADA, THE HUGE AND RUGGED PALACE, HE BUILT IN POONA, WOULD TELL MANY A TALE OF STRENGTH AND VALOUR.

WHICH OF THE ACKs HAVE YOU STILL NOT READ?

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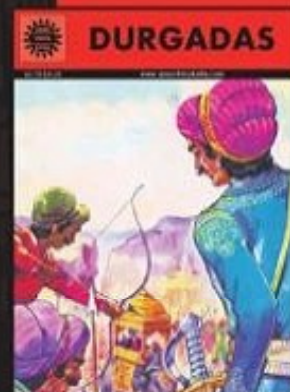
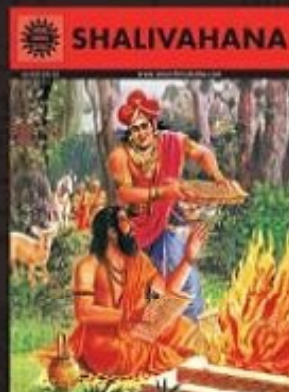
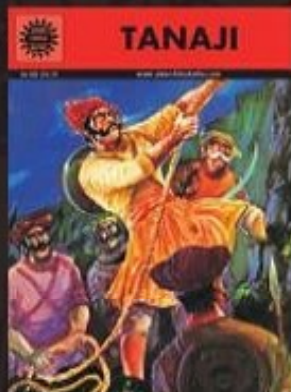
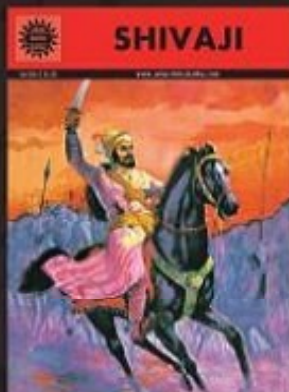
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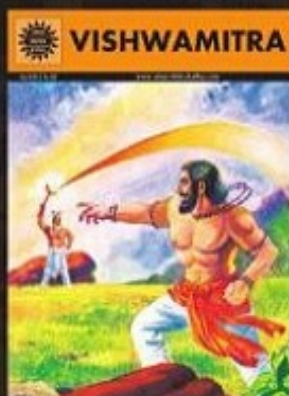
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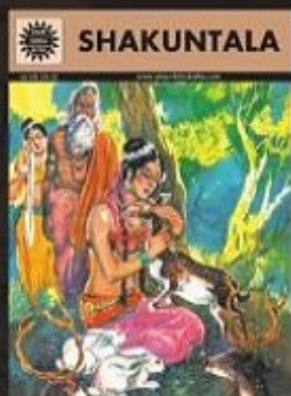
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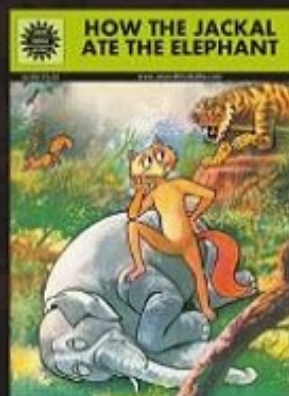
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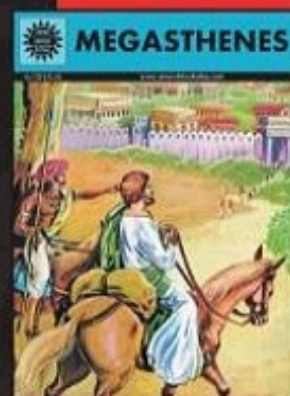
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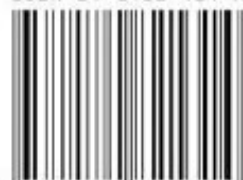
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